

Your CV provides the crucial first impression that your potential future employer will have of you. This makes it an extremely important document and justifies taking the time to do it as well as possible. After all, there is no greater incentive than knowing that a well-structured and informative CV can help to secure you the perfect role.

Structure

- Personal Details
- Education and Qualifications
- Legal Career and Experience
- Skills, Achievements and Interests

General

- **Length:** 2 to 3 pages are recommended. If your CV is 4 or 5 pages long (or longer), consider what role it is that you are applying for and trim or remove any parts that do not support this. You will be able to expand on your experience during the interview - your CV is simply providing a summary for you.
- **Gaps:** Making sure that every gap on your CV is accounted for is crucial, including any travelling, work experience or non-legal positions held.
- **Style:** Keep your CV slightly conservative and readable - unconventional fonts will make you stand out for the wrong reasons. Likewise a variety of colours will look unprofessional.
- **Accuracy:** Most firms are quite savvy when it comes to spotting discrepancies and will not hesitate to point them out...which can quite often result in a failed application.
- **Check:** Make sure all details, especially dates, are correct - it is worth comparing with your social media profile(s) to ensure that there are no inconsistencies.
- **Double Check:** Read through carefully at least two or three times. It is particularly important to double check the spelling of any client names that you may have included as they often will not be corrected by spell check.
- **Maintenance:** Even if you are not considering a move right now, it is always worth regularly noting what you are doing in your current role. You never know when things may change and having a readymade set of notes will make it much easier to recall the salient details that you wish to include in your CV.

Content

Personal Details:

- Name, address, email and mobile number. You can include a personal statement but avoid generic buzzwords as they generally will not have the impact desired. Instead, keep this straightforward and state what you are seeking, along with any interesting/unique aspects.

Education and Qualifications:

- Include all institutions and grades from A-Level to post-graduate courses. It is important to know that the worst will be presumed if you do not provide grades for all courses.
- Your academic transcripts may be requested so it is always good to have them to hand.
- If you are qualified to practice in multiple jurisdictions, include the dates that you qualified and if possible your relevant PQE.

Legal Career:

- Provide the month and year that you joined and left all firms. The level of detail that you include for each position that you have held can vary. As a general rule, try to include at least 5-6 bullet points per position/training seat to cover what you have been involved with.
- Within the bullet points mention specifically what the matter was, your involvement and any other interesting aspects. If it was a transaction or case for a certain value, it is good to include this. Generally, the higher the number the better.
- If the matter is in the public domain you can name the client, otherwise provide a general description. For example, 'a global drinks manufacturer'.
- What you include here will usually form the basis of the majority of questions at interview, so always be prepared to expand upon what you have included in your CV.
- If you had a prior career or held other jobs before training as a lawyer, it is worth noting these with a line or two, especially if there is a connection to your practice area.

Skills, Achievements and Interests:

- Provide languages (fluency level, verbal and/or written), non-law qualifications and personal achievements and interests.
- Interests are often overlooked by candidates but it is relevant as firms try to ensure that their lawyers have both professional and personal development.
- Knowing that you are interested in certain topics or activities can often provide a spark during the interview and may form part of the reason why you choose a firm or vice versa. Without this information on the CV, a potential opportunity may well be lost.

Your consultant at Lamprell Legal Recruitment will be able to provide further advice and ensure that your CV is as strong as possible when you are ready to make an application for your next role.